Submitted Testimony of
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Housing Committee Public Hearing
Legislative Office Building
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In OPPOSITION to

R.B. No. 292: AN ACT CONCERNING HEATING EFFICIENCY IN NEW RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION AND MAJOR ALTERATIONS OF RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS.

Dear Housing Committee: I am President and owner of Hocon Gas, Inc., we employ approximately 150 people in Connecticut and have operating facilities in Norwalk, Danbury, Torrington, Guilford, Waterbury and Suffield. We also operate approximately 50 service, fuel oil and bulk (Bobtail) delivery vehicles in our state. We have been in business for 70 years. I respectfully submit testimony in **STRONG OPPOSITION TO R.B. No. 292: AN ACT CONCERNING HEATING EFFICIENCY IN NEW RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION AND MAJOR ALTERATIONS OF RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS.**

R.B. No: 292 proposes to prohibit the use of electric resistance or fossil fuel combustion system as the primary source of heating, ventilation and air conditioning or water heating in new residential construction or in major alterations of residential buildings. We are opposed to the bill for the following reasons:

- Whole home electric heat pump systems can cost between $20,000 and $40,000, compared to oil heat, propane or natural gas systems that typically cost between $7,000 and $12,000.

- Since most electric heat pumps (i.e., minisplits) struggle to keep homes warm when temperatures plunge, it requires that traditional heating systems be used to ensure that the house can stay warm. Why should consumers have to have and pay for two separate heating systems.

- Most heat pumps have to either be sized to meet the heating needs of the home, or the cooling needs of the home. That means if you size the system to adequately cool a home, it will underperform when heating the home.

- Consumers should be able to choose the equipment and fuel they want to use to heat their home. Taking away consumer will choice drive up costs and reduce competition.

- Annual maintenance on whole home heat pump systems can take an entire day, which increases the recommended annual maintenance costs by two to five times the cost of a traditional heating system (depending on the number of heads). Not to mention the cost it takes to maintain your secondary heating system.

- Heat pumps are located on the exterior of a home, which means that when the system fails it requires a licensed service professional to work outside in the snow and cold. Where a traditional heating system is located in a basement where work can be done comfortably and safely.

- Heat pumps utilize R-410A which is a refrigerant mixture that is much higher pressure that its predecessor R22 which seeks to escape to the atmosphere. R-410A has a global warming potential 1,924 times greater than carbon dioxide over a 100-year period.

- Heat pumps only last fifteen to twenty years, where a traditional boiler can last thirty years or more.

- Parts to repair and maintain heat pumps are proprietary, unlike traditional heating and cooling systems that have parts that are interchangeable, making it harder and more costly to address problems with them.

- Electricity in not emissions free – natural gas, coal, and oil can generate more than 60% of our electricity.

- Heating oil and propane are transitioning to renewable fuels. In fact, the legislature passed a bill last year that will require the use of locally produced biodiesel to replace traditional heating oil.

Finally, We Just Don't Like the NUMBERS